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ACCELERATING ENTREPRENEURIAL SUCCESS PODCAST

EPISODE  
**210**

**Randy Hartnell**

Show Notes at: <http://www.aesnation.com/210>

**Episode #210**

**AESNATION.COM**  
John Bowen and Randy Hartnell



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Best of success,



John Bowen  
Co-founder, AES Nation

**John Bowen:** As entrepreneurs, we all want to make a difference, but the world changes, our world changes, and we have to adapt. You know, in Silicon Valley, where I'm fortunate to be, we call it a pivot, and many of us are very familiar. I've got an entrepreneur and a good friend with us today who has just mastered the art of pivot. One unbelievable pivot, and a lot of fine-tuning along the way to become a very successful entrepreneur.

We're together in the Genius Network mastermind group, and I was just with Randy Hartnell, and I just wanted him to share his story with my good friends, our audience, and help you make a huge difference, because we're all faced with challenges along the way, and many of us have been knocked down by more than 2x4s, and we're not judged by how we get knocked down, but how we get back up and really make a difference, and we have the opportunity to make a huge difference today.

I'm John Bowen. This is AES Nation, all about accelerating your success. Stay tuned. You do not want to miss these lessons.

So excited to have you here today. First of all, thank you very much.

**Randy Hartnell:** Hi, John. It's great to be here. Thanks for the opportunity.

**John Bowen:** Well, and it was all I could do not to tell in the introduction your background and how you got to where you are, because you have done a massive pivot, and you're very successful at both, but the world changes along the way, and you and I have known each other for a number of years, and we've shared and helped each other. I want to share you with our audience now, but before I go into some of the life lessons that you've shared with me and taught me, I want you to give a little bit of background, so they have a framing.

Tell me kind of how you got started in all this. I always joke that we don't wake up at age five, at least most of us. There are a few that I've interviewed in over two other podcasts that said, "Yeah, I did wake up at age five and I was going to do this business," but most of us didn't. Tell us kind of how you evolved into having this really exceptional business that's helping so many people stay healthy.

**Randy Hartnell:** Thanks, John. I'd be happy to share that story. I guess it started when I was going to school. I was in college at Berkeley, pursuing an English degree, and I had intended to go to law school after I got my English degree. Along the way, I needed to find a way to make some money in the summers and managed to land a job up on a fishing boat up in Alaska, and so I started going up there in the summers, and it's great, physical work. Make sure you're off the grid, and really fell in love with it, so when I graduated with my English degree, rather than go to law school, I decided to become a full-time fisherman.

**John Bowen:** Well, that is required, right, an English degree for fishing in Alaska? I always think of the Deadliest Catch, watching that show, and I'm not sure that I've seen too many English majors on it, right?

**Randy Hartnell:** Well, I like to tell people that there are actually quite a few college graduates.

**John Bowen:** Yes.

**Randy Hartnell:** ...but they just don't ... They're not quite as colorful as some of the people that get chosen for that show, but anyway, I fell in love with it. You know, you're working out in nature, it's physical. It's really the hunter-gatherer occupations. You're actually hunting these fish, and it's very competitive, it's primal. You're sort of feeding your tribe, and it's just really unusual, and I would go up in the summertime, when the salmon were running, so it was like you see on Deadliest Catch where we're out in the ice, and the snow, and the giant waves. It was relatively humane fisheries. Loved doing that.

I bought a boat, and then a couple more boats, and I had different crews. I had boats specialized for different fisheries, herring, and salmon, and was doing that for, like I said, close to 20 years. I probably would still be doing it, except along about 18, 20 years ago, farmed salmon started to explode on world markets, and over the course of a relatively short time, just a couple of years, our price collapsed. We had been a little arrogant, you know, I think as maybe a lot of people can be when they think they've got a good thing going, and they kind of forget about the competition, and we felt that our fish, our wild salmon, were so superior to the farmed salmon that were out there.

There was no way anybody would want those more than ours, but they had the advantage of ... They had a lot of advantages. They were cheaper, they were available 365 days a year, they could be delivered fresh. Nobody really knew the difference between farmed and wild salmon. Significant environmental differences, nutritional differences. In a very short time, all of a sudden, our prices started collapsing, and at the end ... We held out as long as we could.

**John Bowen:** Randy, how far did they go down? I mean, I'm trying to remember the timeframe of this.

**Randy Hartnell:** We were getting 40 cents a pound for these beautiful, wild sake salmon that are probably the most nutrient dense.

**John Bowen:** It's my favorite fish in the world, too, so ...

**Randy Hartnell:** Just incredible, you know, the value, and I didn't really at that time even understand what a nutritional powerhouse they were. I mean, they are the ultimate super

food. I can explain that more later, but anyway, the bottom line was they didn't want to pay us much for them. Basically, bread and water.

**John Bowen:** What, so did it go down by a third?

**Randy Hartnell:** It went down to about 40 cents a pound.

**John Bowen:** Okay. What was the high point?

**Randy Hartnell:** I think four to five times that. Four or five.

**John Bowen:** Okay. So, I mean, enough that everybody noticed it.

**Randy Hartnell:** Yeah, I imagine if all of a sudden, your income went to 20% of what you'd been making, or less.

**John Bowen:** I've pivoted at about 60%, so that's a big one.

**Randy Hartnell:** The thing that made it especially difficult is that was about the time the internet bubble exploded, and there were just a little of difficult things going on about that time. It kind of came together, and I knew when I got to the end of the season and didn't have enough to pay my crew that I needed to start looking for something else to do.

**John Bowen:** I mean, I'm going to just flash the website here. I mean, you've got one of the most successful seafood, wild seafood and organic on the internet. I mean, you probably couldn't have imagined at the time, the internet's just starting, your business is collapsing, where you are, but how did you make that pivot? I mean, one, you got knocked down, so you had to do something, but ...

**Randy Hartnell:** Yeah, I had a friend at the time. We were all in the same boat, we're all trying to figure out what the hell are we going to do here, and he called me up and led me out to dinner one night, and he said, "Randy, I think I've got a tiger by the tail. I've been taking some of my fish around the supermarkets around the country, and setting up a barbecue, and barbecuing, and telling a story to the people coming into the store, and then selling the fish in the store, and when they learn the differences between our salmon and the farmed salmon, they totally love ours, and they're willing to pay for it, and the problem is that most stores only have farmed salmon," so that was really a boost.

It made me realize that once people got the message, once they learned the difference, that they wanted what we had, they just couldn't get it, and I occasionally would have people contact me and say, "Randy, I want wild salmon. Where can I find it?" And eventually I told

this woman who was especially persistent that, "Well, I can send you some," and then along about that time, I happened to catch an Omaha Steaks commercial on TV. I think I was up late one night, trying to figure out how I was going to pay our bills, and saw this Omaha Steaks infomercial.

I later found that they were selling \$80 million worth of this red meat that you can buy at any grocery store on the internet, whereas we had this incredibly healthy, sustainable, wild salmon that you couldn't find anywhere at the time, and I had access to lots of it, I had a lot of knowledge about it, and so all that came together to where I kind of had this light bulb moment that maybe I could shift my wild salmon through the mail to people, like Omaha Steaks does. We really built the company based on that model, and it continues till today.

**John Bowen:** You know, there's so many lessons in that. I think I'm going to go to one really quick. The power of story that I ... I'm with a lot of fellow CEOs, going out to dinner a lot, and I know if there's salmon on a menu, everybody asks whether it's farm-raised or it's wild now, and it's amazing that transition where nobody cared, where now, if it's not wild, they won't order it, or they won't buy it. I don't go to grocery stores. I've got fortunately a great wife that does, but you know, it is the power of ... You know, because why would most people know the difference? They wouldn't unless there was a powerful story to do it, so yes, I mean, it's just all these steps along the way are amazing.

**Randy Hartnell:** Yes. That's been one of our guiding principles and missions from the very beginning, was to educate people, you know? For their benefit, for our benefit, for the benefit of the industry. There's one that people don't think about. We have this saying that if you want to save wild salmon, you need to eat wild salmon, and what that means is you need to support the wild salmon industry because that is the most powerful political voice for the salmon.

In contrast to that, if everybody has to get out of the fishing industry, the local people have to have alternative sources of income, and so if they can't make a living catching fish, they invite different industries in that are no friend to wild salmon, so for instance, mining, drilling, just resource extraction, hydroelectric, or just all kind of tourism.

In some places in Alaska ... It's like Ketchikan, for example, which used to be sort of ground zero for fishing in southeast Alaska. When the fishing industry was on the verge of collapse during that time, they built a massive dock, found the water for it, and started soliciting cruise ships, and I went up there a few years ago, and there were five giant cruise ships of that dock, that little tiny fishing town, and I mean, it's wonderful for people to go up there and be able to experience that, but it's not really that great for the environment.

**John Bowen:** Yes, it's not great for the great environment. Yes, it's a delicate balance, because I had the opportunity to go fishing. I have a friend that has a home on the Kenai

Peninsula, and my wife and I went out with them, and had never caught a wild salmon at that point, and she immediately caught a 38-pound one, and fortunately I caught a 48-pound one, you know, half an hour later.

**Randy Hartnell:** Wow, that's amazing.

**John Bowen:** Yes, and it was before they were letting you fish with live bait, so they only brought two in that day, and we got ... I mean, or 10 of them, and we got two, and it's just being in that beautiful setting, and pristine, and just flying in, it's just spectacular, and you know, you want to preserve that, and there's nothing like eating on the back-deck salmon at that.

It was just amazing, and it leads me to kind of the first ... You know, I want to go over a number of lessons you and I were talking about. One is be passionate about something you really care about, and I know you care about this, but give us kind of, as we're coaching our fellow entrepreneurs, sharing life lessons, Randy, why is that so important in building your business?

**Randy Hartnell:** Well, I think the ideal is to have one of those jobs that doesn't feel like work, and if you're doing something you love, and I think oftentimes it has a lot to do with helping other people. If you're making other people's lives better, whether it's through financial services, or food, or countless other ways. Just something that feeds you, and I have a doctor friend, very well-known pediatrician, and he has this term called the helper's high, that when you help somebody, especially in a really important, fundamental way, like their financial security or their health through better food or whatever, I think there's a dopamine rush that you get there, and it's just very gratifying.

There's nothing better to be addicted to than helping others. I've just been fortunate in falling into this profession where ... When I was a fisherman, I didn't really know much about the nutritional quality of seafood, but I've learned so much, and realized that, if there is such thing as a silver bullet, in the way of food, seafood is going to be close to it, so ...

**John Bowen:** Well, one of the things I want to go back to, we'll do it a little later. I want to go to your website, because one of the things you have shared, and you've shared with me, we've had some health challenges in our family situation. Just sharing research on how you can improve it and how you can make a difference with your diet, and one of the things ... Somebody told me, "Be passionate about your business," and they had a little different thing. They said, "If you're not passionate, business beats you down a bit, and you'll give up," and it's that persistency, because you're passionate, you love it, and you get the high, as you were saying, Randy. You know, I mean, there is such a high from helping people, making a difference in this world, that very few people get. I mean, this is one of the best things about being an entrepreneur. But you and I have had this conversation many times before, is the

importance of having the right team, surrounding yourself by people smarter than you, A players versus ... Every once in a while, you'll see, "No, you should hire B or C," but share your thoughts on this.

**Randy Hartnell:** I think it was Steve Jobs and probably others that said that a single A player can run circles around a team of B and C players, and I just have found that to be very true, and it's not only that an A player can deliver a lot more, they like to work with other A players. When we finally figured this out and realized that we had to upgrade certain parts of our team, we went out and found one of these A players, and it's just incredible how much more he was doing than his predecessor, and he also has a network of other A players that he can draw on to help us with different projects, that he can recruit into the company, if that's appropriate. It's just some of the best money we've ever spent.

**John Bowen:** No, and I totally agree. I've always tried to do that. On occasion, actually, I've hired B players and lived to regret it. Oftentimes you have to do multiple B players, and then you're telling them what to do. A player just makes a difference. I was just thinking, my next door neighbor is reading a book, Steve Jobs book, on ... I think it was Walter ...

**Randy Hartnell:** Isaacson.

**John Bowen:** ... Isaacson wrote, and his name came up, and he had been fired from the three main companies that Steve started, and he's a really good A player, but I guess Steve and he didn't work well together, but Steve hired him every new company he started, and fired him, too. I was asking Dave. He's got some great stories, I'll just leave it at that.

But this is one of the things. It's so easy to kind of go a little bit cheap on this, and if you're doing something you're passionate about, and you really want to make a difference, nobody created anything good alone. You've got to have some really good people. I mean, we've got this passion, we've got an A team, and you build one heck of a business, Randy, and one of the things I know you're passionate about, and we've talked about this, is the client/customer experience, and give a little bit of your thoughts on that, because I think this is really helpful for all of us, is, you know, with everything changing so much, we kind of think we've got to be novel and everything, and we can miss what's important.

**Randy Hartnell:** Well, like I mentioned to you at one point, a lot of people spend a lot of time worried about where things are going, and what's changing, and how do we keep up with change, and I saw an interview Jeff Bezos this one time, who's a pretty successful entrepreneur, as we all know.

**John Bowen:** Yes. For the one person, out of the 10,000+ listening to ... CEO of Amazon. But anyways, go ahead.



**Randy Hartnell:** Yes. He said what he focuses on is what's not going to change, you know? Five years from now, people are still going to want value, and they're still going to want good customer service. I really took that to heart. It makes a lot of sense. We've always ran our business based on the golden rule, and it's a bit cliché, but it's true, you know? If you treat other people the way you want to be treated, generally you're going to be better off.

We put a lot of energy and resources into building a really excellent customer service team. 24/7 live calls. All of our operators are local, or domestic, and very knowledgeable, and just do everything we can to try to improve that customer experience, and now with so many different companies getting into the home delivery food business, it's more critical than ever. We have to differentiate ourselves, and that's one area that we have under control. We can take really great care of our customers, and it's paid off. We have an industry-leading retention rate among our customers, and ...

**John Bowen:** Yes, one of the things, Randy. It's really interesting, because more recently, one of my businesses, I have a membership program, and we're doing the performance, and I've always been a financial guy, so everything we do, we perform it out, and see it's a rational decision, and one of the things that just shocked me that I didn't realize, the monthly retention of a monthly membership program for my business, let's say a thousand members at \$400 a month.

The difference between ... Classically, most businesses keep them for three or four months, and huge, huge ... Lose a third a month. We were looking at, well, we can do better, and the difference between ... Somewhere between 10 and 5%. Well, that difference in a two-year ramp up of the business made a difference between four to \$6 million dollars of IBIDA, and really, probably, if we were to sell the business, you know, at least \$10 million difference.

It's like, okay, should I have that one extra client service experience person doing the call, as you were saying, and we lose sight of this. Forget about it if you're not going to take good care of your clients, which you should, or your customers, but the lifetime value, and with the competition, this is huge.

**Randy Hartnell:** Oh, it's so true. In fact, we just did an in-depth lifetime value assessment of our customer base, and what we discovered ... It's the first time we've done it in a few years, and what we discovered was we have customers that have ordered from us as many as a hundred times, but what we discovered is when somebody has ordered from us five times, generally, they're not going anywhere. They've comfortable, and satisfied, and we don't really need to be spending a lot of money advertising to those people. We can take what we had been directing, trying to advertise to them, and get more people in the door in the first place, and ...

**John Bowen:** There's a new book out called Retention Point. A guy, Robert Skrob, and I thought it was really ... It's an hour read, so no excuse for not reading it, but it's saying exactly what you're saying. He was studying all membership programs, and once you got to a point where they were a client, there was a 70% chance you were going to keep them for the rest of their life, but until we get people used to using our solutions successfully, and get the results that they want, they're at high risk, and investing the time upfront ... It doesn't mean if they reach that point, you ignore them, but it's a different service level, because there's a huge difference of value with somebody that's ordered a hundred times from you and that first order, type thing.

**Randy Hartnell:** That's right. Well, and we know that it's way cheaper to keep someone than to try to find a new customer.

**John Bowen:** Well, that's said so often, Randy, but the reality is, it is. I mean, acquisition costs are so high anymore, with all the noise in the marketplace. Yes, there's cheaper ways over the internet to get out there and everything else, but you and I are not the only ones that know that, and so rising above, and I want to go to ... because I think this is one.

You know, you're a soft-spoken guy. When we first met, didn't ... There are guys in our mastermind groups that are loud, because it's a marketing group, and some very loud, but when you come across, you walk the talk. The integrity, the authenticity, and you bring that into your business, and I want fellow entrepreneurs to understand the importance of that, because when you're fighting the noise, you know, you can shout louder. Maybe get that one client, but if you want to have that long-term experience, that integrity and authenticity, it's just so powerful that you're doing.

**Randy Hartnell:** Well, you know, I think people have integrity or they don't. I don't know that you can fake it. A lot of people try. In my industry in particular, there's just a tremendous amount of fraud. Bait and switch. People don't know. Just take farmed versus wild salmon. Most people can't tell the difference, and as you were saying earlier, a lot more people now understand there is a difference, and they ask for wild, but they honestly really often don't know if they're getting it or not. I've personally experienced this countless times.

What we try to do is be that reliable solution. You're definitely going to get what you're paying for when you shop with us, and I am very fortunate that I came from the industry. I spent 20 years there, catching these things, so I know the industry, I know the fish really intimately, if you will, and I think that's one advantage. That's one thing that sets us apart from buying your salmon on Amazon.

**John Bowen:** Yes, no, well, and none of us like to be taken advantage.

**Randy Hartnell:** That's right.

**John Bowen:** I mean, I was sharing before we turned on the camera. A very high-end restaurant in my little community that unfortunately ... Great guy. I'd count him as a friend, and he made a very big mistake. They were having a hard time getting one kind of fish, high-end, and I don't want to give too much, because any of you can search it on Google and find him, but then he went ahead and did a cheaper fish, and he probably saved, over a course of a year that supposedly he did it, about \$30,000, maybe a little more than that. The local county's health came and fined him \$100,000, which, you know, not insignificant for a restaurant, but the publicity that he got out of that probably cost him a couple million dollars, because he had multiple restaurants in our town, and all-

**Randy Hartnell:** And his reputation forever, right? I mean, you just can't recover from that kind of ...

**John Bowen:** I would say that he's almost recovered now, three years later, and had he not made a lot of money beforehand ... You know, he went through savings, and all kinds of employee turnover, and family issues, and you know, this is ... Even if you're not moral, you should be, because the pain of not doing it, getting caught, is high, and then you can't remember what you said. Just do the right thing, I've always ... You know.

**Randy Hartnell:** Well, you know, I can understand that a lot of people can get in a really tight position, where they've got a lot of customers, their customers want their fish, and if nature decides not to produce the fish that year, or the boat that was going to deliver them sinks, or breaks down, or whatever. There's just all kinds of reasons that the supply could be interrupted, and if less scrupulous people can go buy something that looks just like it somewhere else, they do.

**John Bowen:** Well, I mean, you were telling me this story on the sushi, you know, the different types.

**Randy Hartnell:** Yes.

**John Bowen:** Why don't you share that story, because I think this authenticity ... I can see somebody being upset. You have a restaurant. My wife likes only one kind of fish, and if they didn't have the fish, she would be very disappointed. On the other hand, she would appreciate the fellow saying, "You know what? The boat burned down. The guy I have the contract ... " You know, whatever happened, happened, and, you know, the government tightened down, whatever it is, versus learning later that she had been tricked, that she thought she was eating this and wasn't. We're talking about fish, but this is in every walk of life this happens.

**Randy Hartnell:** John, you know, I have one of my closest friends, who got a retirement settlement, or he had a windfall of some sort, and he gave it to a local financial adviser who, to make a long story short, basically robbed him, and he lost it. There are bad actors in every sector, as we all know.

**John Bowen:** Well, most of them are pretenders, so they're just giving bad advice, but there's the exploiters in every single industry, and we've got to be careful of both types.

**Randy Hartnell:** That's right. That's right. You know, it always comes down to finding people you can trust, and most people are so happy to do that that once they do find you, and whether you're a plumber, or an electrician, or a financial adviser, or a fisherman, whatever, people are going to stick with you.

**John Bowen:** You know, I've got a fairly large place in multiple businesses, and I tell you, when I find somebody who's good, I don't want them ever to leave, type thing, and as long as they're reasonably fair and equitable-

**Randy Hartnell:** Just that, you know, when you get somebody that you can trust, and yes.

**John Bowen:** Yes. Well, enough said on that, but make sure we're all doing that, and then I just want to come back to health, because one of the things that is so important, and I look at it also on the financial side because of my background. You know, we get caught up in getting basis points. Little increases and return, and save a little on taxes here, and all esoteric, but what's important to all of us as entrepreneurs is the people we love, the causes we care about, and making a difference in the world. Well, finance is one, but I think even more important is health, and you've made that one of your passions, and really one of the reasons you do what you do.

**Randy Hartnell:** Oh, it's so true. As I said, when I started the company, I didn't really know what an omega-3 was, the difference between fat and every other part of the fish. I've had just a major education in the last 17 years, and for those of you, your listeners who are familiar with the Kolbe scoring system, I'm a number nine fact-finder.

**John Bowen:** Well, that's very unusual for most entrepreneurs. A lot of quick starter nines, but not too many fact-finder nines.

**Randy Hartnell:** I just will turn over every rock to get to the facts and the truth, and there's so much BS out there, and especially when it comes to seafood. I mean, I could just tell you so many stories about all the baiting and switching, and the nets, and the misinformation, but one of the things I've learned ... I mean, I've got a lot of scientific conferences, nutrition

conferences, spoke to some of the ... Actually, my closest friends are now leading nutrition scientists, so I really feel like I have got to bottom of, and understand pretty well, almost on a molecular level, the nutrients that are in seafood and wild salmon.

What very few people understand is that every single cell in our body, you know, our heart tissue, our muscle tissue, our fat, our brains, our eyes, every single cell in our body has a lipid membrane that requires these omega-3 fats, and 99% of people in this country are deficient in them, and because every cell in our body needs them, that when you are deficient, it can manifest itself in dozens of different diseases. National Academy of Science identified, this was several years ago, 60 different chronic conditions linked to omega-3 fatty acid deficiency.

When I learned that I'm selling this fish that is one of the richest sources of that, I did get excited about it, and I have focused on sort of the health aspect of the food that we sell. You know, our friend, Joe Polish, says ... I'm backing up just a second. People will look at our website, they'll look at the seafood we're selling, and they'll say, "Oh, looks kind of expensive to me," and as Joe says ... He tells a story. The million-dollar racehorse.

If you had a million-dollar racehorse, what would you feed it? Well, you would feed it the best possible diet that you could feed it, and the money would be no expense, and we are all million dollars racehorses, and we all need to be healthy, because we're all running this race that we're running. When you look at high quality seafood, the products that we're selling, they're probably one of the best values in food.

**John Bowen:** Oh man, it just flashed on the screen the ... That salmon looks awful good, too.

**Randy Hartnell:** I'm not just saying that because I sell this. I mean, we have lots of customers. I'm not trying to pitch my ... I'd love to get more customers, like everybody would, but really I'm just so passionate about it because I've seen it makes such a difference in so many people's lives, including people very close to me, that had been diagnosed for years with chronic or genetic conditions, and they kept getting prescriptions for drugs, and creams, and different topical solutions to mask the symptoms.

When I started learning more about this whole concept of the omega-3 and omega-6 ratio, and we don't have time to go into it all today, but when I learned about that, and started applying it in my own family, just incredible differences. There's very clear biological mechanisms that are going on there, but sickness is so profitable, and there are just so many vested interests in the status quo, it's almost impossible to get policy to reflect the science. We're seeing that now more than ever, probably. Anyway, I'm just passionate about sharing that, because there's nothing better than helping somebody get over something.

**John Bowen:** Well, you know, and Randy, why don't you help us? How, if they do want to get started with you, and I'm going to put up the website. What's the best way to get started, not only ... Because when I look at this, is it's not only you have the great food, but really getting your great client experience, and seeing how another fellow entrepreneur is building a very successful business, but how would they get started best?

**Randy Hartnell:** Well, thanks, John. Probably the easiest way is just to go to [vitalchoice.com](http://vitalchoice.com), and you will see Vital Box in that top menu, and basically that's just a subscription program where you can pick ... The only choice you have to make is between one of the three different types of offerings we have. One of them is just a salmon box, one is a salmon and whitefish box, and one is a salmon, whitefish, and shellfish, and they're all fantastic.

We developed this actually based on a conversation I had at one of our Genius Network meetings, where somebody told me that they came to our website, and they were just overwhelmed with all the choices, and they just wanted me to send me some fish, you know? We put together these three boxes, and that's what we'll do. It's just super simple, and the thing is that once you have a chance to try it, you can figure out what you like, maybe you don't like as much, you want more of something or other. We can customize it. That's the easiest way, I think, for us to introduce what we do, our products and our services to your community.

**John Bowen:** No, I appreciate it, Randy, and I can tell everybody that it is phenomenal, and you don't want to miss it, but let me wrap up here really quick on what are the key takeaways from this, and there's some good ones. Sometimes we get caught up that, geez, is there anything new? You know, there isn't a lot new. It's doing the right thing at the right time and being passionate. Let's pick businesses that we're really passionate. If we're not, we can pivot, we can sell, we can ... But life's too short. Let's do something that we really are making a difference, that we care about.

Second, surround yourself with A players. I mean, there was a time where we were doing factory work, everybody, that maybe some B players would be okay, but so many of us are in some type of knowledge-type business and differentiating. You got to have A players. The quality of life that you get to have by having great people is just phenomenal.

Customer/client experience, as Randy said. I mean, this is the easiest one to drop, and the lifetime value of clients is huge, and you have to do that well. That's kind of, to me, table stakes. You got to nail the client experience.

Integrity and authenticity. I mean, I think Randy's a great example of that, and this is the that it's, again, easy not to do, and you can get a pretty quick start, but we've all seen businesses,

maybe some of ours, that have burnt out because they weren't that, so we're in it for the long haul, and then health.

You know, it's funny. I don't think I ever heard the racehorse analogy from Joe, being in his mastermind for nine years, but I think that's ... You got a million dollar ... Most of us, our largest capital asset, if we could reflect it on a net worth statement, is our own human capital, and just going out and eating junk food all the time, it's just crazy, and then, you know, Randy, the salmon just tastes so damn good, too.

But I want to thank you very much for sharing your insights and making a difference. Aesnation.com, go. We'll have the links to Randy's site, and transcript, show notes, and that type of thing. In the meantime, go out and make a difference. Your clients, your future clients, customers, they're all counting on you. Don't let them down. We wish you the best of success.

**Randy Hartnell:** Thank you.

## A Second Opinion on Your Finances

*A Complimentary Service from Financial Advisor Select for the Members of AES Nation*

Dear Fellow Entrepreneur,

Like many members of AESNation, I'm a serial entrepreneur. In addition to co-founding AESNation, I'm the founder and CEO of Financial Advisor Select, a firm dedicated to helping successful people make informed financial decisions by introducing them to top financial advisors.

If you're like many successful entrepreneurs, you and your family already have a relationship with a financial advisor. You may even work with several financial advisors. If you are completely satisfied with these relationships and confident that your finances are on track toward helping you achieve all that is most important to you, we congratulate you.

However, you may not be entirely satisfied. You may be wondering if there's a financial advisor who is better-suited to address your family's very specific financial challenges. If so, you are not alone. In today's uncertain economic climate, many successful entrepreneurs are wondering if they have the right financial advisor.

To help you find out if you are currently being served well, Financial Advisor Select is offering a complimentary second-opinion service to all qualified members of AES Nation. Simply [contact us](#) to schedule an exploratory call with one of our personal financial concierges. We will introduce you to a financial advisor who we believe can address your particular needs. The financial advisor will then meet with you and provide you with a second opinion on your finances. There is absolutely no cost or obligation to you.

We look forward to assisting you.

Best of success,



John Bowen  
Founder and CEO  
Financial Advisor Select